

Parishioners to file appeal again today

By D. Craig MacCormack / Daily News Staff

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FRAMINGHAM -- The St. Jeremiah Appeals Committee will hand deliver its revised appeal of the church's May 13 closing to the Archdiocese of Boston offices today, said co-chairwoman Mary Beth Carmody.

The new appeal is largely the same as the previous one, which was voided by two errors in the archdiocese's decree of suppression last month. Carmody crafted the final document yesterday afternoon.

"I think we have some new information about why we should remain open," she said, referring to the overflow crowds at confirmation services held at St. George's, the so-called welcoming parish with St. Jeremiah in vigil.

Carmody and fellow co-chairwoman Jackie Lemmerhirt join committee members Maureen Bonzey, Lorraine Dray, Mary-Ann Moore, Adam Sell, William Sell and Thomas Schmitz as those who signed the new appeal, which is due next week.

Today marks the start of the third week of the vigil, which started two days before the final Mass at St. Jeremiah. More than 200 visitors have signed the guest book at the back of the parish.

The around-the-clock vigil has been a nice way to put some names together with faces, parishioner Dick Pabst said yesterday afternoon.

"It really builds a sense of community among all of us," he said. "You get to know some people you've seen around the parish but maybe never had a chance to talk to before."

Among those who visited the vigil yesterday was Louise Dittami, who called herself "one of many parishioners who is sad to see this happen." Other guests included a pair from St. Albert the Great in Weymouth.

Pabst is strong in his belief the vigil is well worth it.

"Maybe (archdiocese officials) will reconsider if we stay here and raise their awareness about what's going on," he said. "Unless you try, nothing will happen."

Wednesday night, about 10 parishioners were trained in becoming leaders of the weekly communion services that will become a staple of the St. Jeremiah vigil. Adam Sell was among those who attended the session.

A parishioner from St. Susanna in Dedham led the training, which eventually will help St. Jeremiah parishioners lead their own services, said Sell. The services are scheduled for 4:30 p.m. tomorrow and 10:15 a.m. Sunday.

Communion services fulfill a Catholic's weekly requirement to attend Mass on Sundays, said Sell. Homilies are replaced by reflections, after which all in the congregation gather around the reflection leader in a circle.

At that time, they receive communion, which is consecrated by a priest before it is brought to the church.

"People don't have to feel the need to go to another church to receive communion," said Sell.

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